

social health news



AMERICAN SOCIAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

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SPECIAL STATEMENT ISSUE

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ANNUAL JOINT STATEMENT NOTES NATIONAL VD INCREASE—SPOTLIGHTS TEENAGE RISE

More states and cities reported increases in early infectious syphilis in fiscal 1959 than for any previous year since 1953; yet not even one-sixth of the early infectious syphilis or one-quarter of the gonorrhea estimated to occur each year is being found and treated.

This data is contained in the *Annual Joint Statement on Today's Venereal Disease Control Problem* which was released February 23 at a press conference in New York City by the American Social Health Association.

Findings were presented by Conrad Van Hyning and T. Lefoy Richman, ASHA executive and associate executive director.

Statement's implications for private physicians, educators, state and local health department officers and magistrates were discussed by a panel consisting of Dr. William H. Bristow, Director, Bureau of Curriculum Research, Board of Education, New York City; Dr. E. Gurney Clark, Dr. P.H., Professor of Epidemiology, University of Columbia, School of Public Health, New York City; Dr. William Dougherty, Director, Bureau of Preventable Disease, New Jersey State Health Department, Trenton, N. J.; Dr. Nicholas J. Fiumara, M.P.H., Director, Division of Venereal Disease, State Department of Public Health, Boston, Mass., and President of the American Venereal Disease Association; Mrs. Elizabeth S. Force, Associate Director, Division of Education, and Family Life Consultant, ASHA; Judge Peter M. Horn, Magistrates' Court, New York City; and Dr. Jules E. Vandow, Chief, Division of Social Hygiene, New York City Department of Health.

The Statement is sponsored by the American Social Health Association, the Association of State and Territorial Health Officers and the American Ve-

nereal Disease Association, and was developed from information provided by the health departments of all 50 states, 3 counties, 91 cities with populations over 100,000, and the District of Columbia.

The number of early infectious syphilis cases increased from 6,661 in 1958 to 8,178 in 1959, or 22.8%. Gonorrhea rose from 220,191 in 1958 to 237,318 in 1959, or 7.8%.

There is every evidence that these trends will continue. First quarter reports for fiscal 1960 show 42% more cases of early infectious syphilis than for the same period last year.

Data received from the British Isles also indicate a significant rise in venereal disease. The British Co-operative Clinical Group reports increases in all ages for males through 59, and in all ages except 35-49 for females.

During the past year, VD continued to increase in the teenage population. It is up to 14.3% in the 10-14 age group over 1958 and 11.4% in the 15-19 group.

"Startling as these rates are," said Conrad Van Hyning, "they do not begin to show the complete picture. Over half the VD caseloads in public clinics are teenagers and young adults, but there are indications that only one out of four teenage VD cases is brought to diagnosis."

The Statement also points out the greatest concentration of reported VD in all age groups is in cities having populations over 100,000.

In New York City, for example, early infectious syphilis is up 78.3% in the 15-19 age group alone.

Los Angeles County and San Francisco cite rises in all stages of syphilis and gonorrhea, as do Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Atlanta and Chicago.

(Continued on Page 2)

FINDINGS OF NEW YORK CITY TEENAGE VD STUDY PRESENTED

Interest in the New York City Teenage VD Study has prompted a series of speaking engagements for Study Director Dr. Celia Deschin.

On January 14 and 15, Dr. Deschin addressed the National Board of the YWCA in New York City in a Conference termed "Consultation on Today's



Dr. Celia Deschin

Teenagers." She presented the current findings of the Study in the light of teen-age goals and the special problem of rapport and communication between adults and youth.

On January 18, she spoke before the Family Services Committee of the East Harlem Council for Community planning. Focus of her presentation was the impact on teenagers of a prevailing confusion regarding standards of sexual behavior.

On January 27, Dr. Deschin lectured to a class in Epidemiologic Methods at the School of Public Health and Administrative Medicine, Columbia University.

On February 4, Dr. Deschin inter-
(Continued on Page 4)

Honorary Life Membership Goes to Dr. Robert N. Hoyt



Dr. Robert N. Hoyt receives American Social Health Honorary Life Membership Award from Mrs. Robert H. Bishop, Jr., in Cleveland, Ohio.

Dr. Robert N. Hoyt, retiring secretary of the Joint Social Hygiene Committee, Academy of Medicine and Cleveland Health Council, and past-president of the Ohio Social Hygiene Council, was awarded an Honorary Life Membership in the American Social Health Association in Cleveland on January 14.

Presentation of the award was made by Mrs. Robert H. Bishop, Jr., prominent Cleveland welfare volunteer on the occasion of the Committee's annual Social Hygiene Day.

About 600 people attended the event, which was co-sponsored by the Cleveland Council of PTA, Cleveland Health Museum, Cleveland Division of Health, Cleveland Mental Health Association and the Family Health Association of Cleveland.

Principal speaker was Dr. Oscar B. Markey, Consulting Psychiatrist to the Boards of Education of Cleveland and Shaker Heights.

Dr. Markey's topic was "Home and School—One World." Dr. Markey said that the home is the primary educative force in a child's life, and that most children learn from their mothers.

He added that, "Serious illnesses arise from disturbed mother-child relationships," and cautioned that "mothers must beware that they don't become pushovers for their children."

In presenting Dr. Hoyt's award,

which climaxed the program, Mrs. Bishop cited his unique achievements in the social hygiene movement, stating that he "had devoted a lifetime to the public weal," and noted his 24 years of service to the community of Cleveland.

Dr. Hoyt was graduated from Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1909, and received a "Certificate in Public Health" from the former School for Health Officers of Harvard University and MIT in 1920. For which, he was later granted the degree of Master of Public Health by the present School of Public Health of Harvard. In 1925 he received the degree of Doctor of Public Health from the Medical School of the University of Georgia.

Dr. Hoyt went to Cleveland as Assistant Professor of Bacteriology and Public Health at Western Reserve University. He was later Associate Professor of Biology at WRU, and became Secretary of the Joint Social Hygiene Committee, Academy of Medicine and Cleveland Health Council in 1936, a position from which he will retire in April.

His many other duties have included: Coordinator and Educator, Bureau of Venereal Disease Control of the Cleveland Division of Health, and Secretary-Treasurer and President of the Ohio Social Hygiene Council.

JOINT VD STATEMENT

(Continued from Page 1)

The Statement indicates three major blocks to VD control. They are: lack of private physician participation in casefinding and reporting; lack of knowledge about VD, coupled with a reluctance among parents, teachers, school administrators, and health workers to support and participate in educational efforts; and insufficient funds.

Over 23 million people in the U. S. live in areas which have inadequate facilities and personnel for VD control.

In the Statement's foreword, T. Lefoy Richman writes, "For nearly a decade now, many of us have been wishing that the spirochete and the gonococcus would take penicillin and die. That they haven't is a frustrating experience to everyone." He adds, "At present, one suspects that a couple of well-trained VD investigators could uncover a VD epidemic in most any city where investigation service is not now available. We are confronted with the prospect of building our attack on the venereal diseases to a realistically effective effort with cooperation from all responsible leadership, or of continuing to support for years to come an inadequately staffed and implemented program." The Statement points out that present Federal Funds do not meet Federal responsibility and national program needs.

Based on consideration of the data gathered, and in order to build this attack, the American Social Health Association, the Association of State and Territorial Health Officers and the American Venereal Disease Association recommend:

1. A minimum Federal appropriation for the VD control of at least \$6.4 million, an increase of one million over the present appropriation.
2. A multi-state demonstration to bring the private physician more effectively into VD control.
3. An education effort involving parents and teachers.
4. An increased research effort in behavioral sciences, immunology and diagnosis of gonorrhea.

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T. LEFOY RICHMAN WRITES NEW PAMPHLET



T. Lefoy Richman

The increase of venereal disease among teenagers in many parts of the country has posed a new challenge to the nation's public health authorities. Details on the nature of the new hazard, its causes, and what is being done to meet it are contained in a new pamphlet written by T. Lefoy Richman, associate executive director of the American Social Health Association.

Titled "Old Plague — New Challenge," the pamphlet emphasizes new trends in VD, and describes some of the new medical and social techniques that have been developed to cope with VD on a public health basis.

Mr. Richman declares that "the teenager has come more prominently into the special VD problem group; sexual behavior is becoming casual among many groups; and that the prostitute is being widely displaced as a spreader of venereal disease."

"Once essentially medical, the VD control effort now gives increased weight to education," he continues—pointing out that "there has emerged a new health profession, requiring specialized skills and aptitudes—VD investigation."

The annual VD-infected population in the United States under twenty years of age is estimated at 200,000. But of these, fewer than 50,000 are reported in any one year.

Mr. Richman underlines the fact that the spectacular medical gains achieved through the use of penicillin have been limited by the fact that most cases of VD, especially among the young, remain undetected.

This is being combatted by the development of a new kind of health

worker—the investigator. "The investigator had to be able to search out and talk to the sex contacts of VD patients wherever they choose to talk—in bars, taverns, bawdy houses, street corners or alleys."

"Although the private physician has always figured prominently in VD thinking," adds Mr. Richman, "he had never really become a part of the control team in any significant nationwide effort. The new program has two major objectives for private physician participation: an increase in reporting from the present 25 per cent to 100 per cent; and an increase in interviews from the present 25 per cent to 100 per cent of those reported."

"Today's rise in VD among young people should not be considered as unrelated to other symptoms of social maladjustment. It should be regarded as one of the elements of a pattern which includes increasing illegitimate parenthood at younger ages, increasing mental health problems and increasing juvenile offenses," he says.

"The family is the earliest and ablest teaching force in society," Mr. Richman states, and "education for the prevention of VD begins there. . . . The community is the larger family. Communities have a fair amount of control over youngsters—if they choose to exercise it. School and church programs can be strengthened to provide the best in recreation and social service. And all the youth-serving agencies can be part of a unified community effort. Control depends on a vigorous prosecution of all of the elements in the present program—diagnosis, treatment, casefinding, plus sane sex education."

VENEREAL DISEASE, OLD PLAGUE — NEW CHALLENGE, a Public Affairs Pamphlet, is available through ASHA Publications office, 1790 Broadway, New York, N. Y. Cost is 20 cents per copy.

SPECIAL ISSUE DELAYED

We are sorry that the February issue of the Social Health News has been delayed. This was necessary in order to give you complete coverage of the Annual Joint Statement release. Your regular March issue will reach you within the next ten days. April's News will be devoted to coverage of the 1960 White House Conference on Children and Youth.

WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE NEWS

"The Nation's Children"

"The Nation's Children," a collection of observations on the conditions, problems and outlook of the nation's young people, was published in February by the Columbia University Press for the White House Conference.

Thirty-four experts have contributed chapters to this work, which was edited by Dr. Eli Ginzberg, Director, Conservation of Human Resources, Columbia University, and Chairman of the Committee on Studies for the White House Conference.

The work is presented in three volumes: "The Family and Social Change," "Development and Education" and "Problems and Prospects."

Photo Exhibit

"These Are Our Children," a photographic report on children and youth in the United States in 1960, will be a highlight of the Golden Anniversary White House Conference on Children and Youth, March 27 through April 2, in Washington, D. C.

The photographs will depict the theme of the Conference—"opportunities for children and youth to realize their full potential for a creative life in freedom and dignity." Approximately 300 pictures, displayed in the west ballroom of the Shoreham Hotel, will illustrate topics to be discussed in the Conference's daily work groups.

Prepared with the technical assistance of the Eastman Kodak Company, the exhibit has been drawn from sources such as newspapers, news services, government agencies, magazines and picture agencies.

In announcing sponsorship, Ephraim R. Gomberg, Conference Director, pointed out that "millions of words on behalf of the unmet needs of children and youth will be uttered at the White House Conference. But in this exhibition—the most ambitious photographic story of the young people ever assembled in our country—we believe that the camera will succeed in catching the very spirit of our Conference."

After a one-week showing in Washington, the exhibit is expected to tour the country and possibly go overseas.



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TEENAGE STUDY

(Continued from Page 1)

preted some of the Study's findings to the Nursing Section at the Venereal Disease Seminar in Memphis, Tenn., held by the U. S. Public Health Service.

T. Lefoy Richman, ASHA associate executive director, also took part in the Seminar's program. Mr. Richman spoke before the Representatives and Investigators Section on the topic of "Teenage Epidemiology."

In an interview with reporter Ida Clemens of the Memphis Commercial Appeal, Dr. Deschin stated that the Study's findings to date show "little basis for stereotyped opinions of teenagers involved in venereal disease," and added that "the teenagers lack of knowledge about venereal disease was 'colossal,' indicating the need for more sex education at an earlier age than is being given."

"The Management of Sexual Problems of Adolescents" was the topic of Dr. Deschin's Workshop at the annual meeting of the American Orthopsychiatric Association on February 27 in Chicago. The day-long session was geared to the impact of current society on the sexual mores of the adolescent.

The April issue of the News will carry a comprehensive story on the current status and early findings of the New York City Study, following its presentation at the White House Conference on Children and Youth.

Public Advisory Committee on VD Control



Members of the Public Advisory Committee on Venereal Disease Control at a meeting in Atlanta, Ga., January 12 through 14. Meeting was held at the invitation of Dr. David E. Price, Chief, Bureau of State Services, United States Public Health Service. The Committee was charged with: Reviewing current status of VD control technology; recommending new areas of emphasis; reviewing the administrative pattern of VD control in the United States and suggesting ways to achieve a greater degree of State and local participation in the total control effort. (Left to right, back row): C. A. Smith, M.D.; Arthur C. Hollister, M.D.; William L. Fleming, M.D.; T. Lefoy Richman; Jules Vandow, M.D.; Leo J. Gehrig, M.D.; Arthur C. Curtis, M.D.; Sidney Olansky, M.D. (Left to right, front row): Benno E. Kuechle; Archie L. Gray, M.D.; Randel Shake; William J. Brown, M. D.; J. V. Irons, M.D.; Mrs. Charles D. Center, Bruce Webster, M.D.; David E. Price, M.D.; Evan Thomas, M.D.; Miss Jane B. Taylor; Rufus B. Robins, M.D.; John Knox, M.D.; Robert J. Anderson, M.D.

